

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL

MEMORANDUM

October 21, 1980

WILLIAM J. SCOTT
ATTORNEY GENERALTO FileFROM Reed NeumanSUBJECT Dead Creek: Interview with Mr.
9/22/80

On 9/22/80 at about 11:30 a.m. and I visited with [REDACTED] at his florist shop (named Theresa's) at 101 Walnut Street in Cahokia. We had previously arranged by phone to meet with Mr. Allan on this day.

[REDACTED] told us that he has lived and worked in this area and at this location for approximately 27 years. As far back as he can remember, Dead Creek has been a naturally flowing stream. He believes that at one time the creek had its origins up near the Poplar Street Bridge, all the way up near National City. The quarry pit adjacent to Mr. Allan's property was long ago dug out by the H.H. Hall Construction Co., predating [REDACTED]'s presence in the area. About two year ago, he said, Hall Construction Co. sold the quarry pit property to someone [whose name he could not recall] who apparently is intending to fill in the pit area. [REDACTED] Allan understands it this way because on occasion he has [REDACTED] this individual bringing stuff to the pond and dumping it in, such as demolition debris, etc.

Immediately to the north of [REDACTED]'s property and the row of homes on his street, there is property owned by a [REDACTED] who has been farming soybeans on that land. Immediately to the north of that property is some farm property and also a building and parking area at one time owned by the Harold Waggoner & Co. trucking firm. He told us Harold Waggoner & Co. is out of business now, because a few years ago there was quite a bit of labor trouble at that facility, forcing the company to go out of business. However, [REDACTED] told us that his ex-brother-in-law, [REDACTED], used to work as a driver for Waggoner. Mr. Burnine apparently still lives in Centreville, and works out of St. Louis as a driver now. This [REDACTED] at one time told

009166

. that workers used to regularly clean out Waggoner's trucks in Dead Creek as a part of their maintenance program there.

However, [REDACTED] familiarity with the creek is mostly limited to the quarry pond, right outside his door. Occasionally he has noticed oily film and other liquid matter in the pond. Also, he recalls many instances where there have been tires, bottles and general junk thrown into the pond.

Two incidents in particular, though, stand out in his mind. On one occasion, some years ago, there was a reddish liquid material in the pond. He understood that the local authorities traced the material back to a spill that occurred at the Cerro Copper Co. plant upstream. He also understood that this happened because a plug was left open at one of Cerro's discharge pipes. Whatever the cause, the material filled up both the ditch and the quarry pit, which is connected to the ditch by a drainage cut and takes in any heavy flow into the ditch itself, serving as sort of a back water area. Another time he recalled that there was a yellowish substance, smelling of burnt grease, that entered the pond area, but it was unknown to him who was responsible for it.

He recalls another incident, perhaps in the early 1970's, when he was spraying orchids at his nursery, using either water from his own well or from the bank of the quarry pond (he couldn't remember which), the result of which the orchids all turned brown and died. His well on the property pumps water for use on his flowers, which well goes about 6 feet down into a layer of sand. He doubts that the well is contaminated with anything, mostly because he says that he commonly sprays water upon his legs and his hands while dousing his flowers, and says "Look at me, I'm all right".

We asked him about the incident with [REDACTED] dog, and whether this was the first time anything like that had ever happened. He said "no", that he had seen kids running barefoot through the creek on many occasions in the past, and never had heard anything bad come of it. He did admit, however, that he did not know his neighbors all that well, and therefore could have been unaware of other incidents.

— In describing the area around Dead Creek, he said that the field to the north of his property, as far back as he could remember, had always been used for farming, as were the fields to the west side of Dead Creek. He said that

Waggoner built his business there maybe 12 to 15 years ago. Before that, the property had also been farm fields. He said now there is a heavy machinery repair shop being run in what used to be Waggoner's Trucking Company building. He said that the Sauget family used to own all of the land in the Cahokia/Sauget area.

We asked him about the Sauget Village Hall area, and he told us that the Sauget Village Hall had been built some time before Waggoner & Co. started business. Maybe about 20 years ago there was a dump somewhere just to the south where the Sauget Village Hall is now, which dump was owned by the Sauget family. He recalls it being open to the public for a dump fee, but thinks that only building material waste and the like was put in there, not any household refuse, and no chemical materials that he could recall. As to the property right south of Queeny Ave. [which I have referred to elsewhere as the Tolbird property], he only remembers that that property at one time had been quite low lying, more so than it looks today. Rogers Cartage Co. now uses that property on occasion to park their trucks there.

As he recalls, the culvert at Queeny Ave. in Dead Creek has been plugged up for at least 10 to 12 years. It was his understanding that Cerro Copper Co. itself did the plugging up. He recalls that Cerro Copper Co. used to be known as Lewin Metals Co.

Now that Dead Creek has been plugged up, he says that it is usually dry except for periods of heavy rains. When a large amount of storm water is present, that water drains into the quarry pit. He says that only once or twice in his recollection has the quarry pit itself actually been dry, but that Dead Creek itself is normally in a dry condition.